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directly at the sun!*

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Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in any format (no PDFs please) by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, or email. Get your submissions to omen@hampshire.edu, the Omen Office, Mia's mailbox (1084), Willow's mailbox (1265), or Max's mailbox (0509).

Policy

The Omen is an every-other-week-ly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that break neither the law nor the Hampshire College Student Handbook. Send your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fanfiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry to omen@hampshire.edu; we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it. Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited, and we can't promise any spellchecking either, so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish.

Your submission must include the name you use around campus: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views. Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which take place every other Friday at 7:00 p.m. in the basement of Merrill A. You should come and answer the staff box question. We don't bite. You can find the Omen every other Monday in Saga, the post office, online at expelallo.men, and just about any other place we can find to put it.

Find all issues here!



Views in the Omen (5)

Do not necessarily (7)

Reflect the staff's views (5)

EDITORIAL

To whom on this fancy sheep college it may concern....

by Max, Willow, and Mia

Ahoy there, mateys – welcome back to the Omen! Thank you all for giving our bēbē a [REDACTED] rebirth! We appreciate it a lot :) In all honesty, we were bamboozled by the amount of submissions, but we are very glad that many still care about this little freak of a publication. As such, we weren't able to properly introduce ourselves last time, so here we are yippeeeeeee 🎉 Just in case you have no fucking clue what this thing is about, here's our little spiel.

The Omen is a biweekly student-run publication that Hampshire students, faculty, staff, and alumni can submit things to that will be distributed across our campus. We will print basically anything you give us as long as you follow our 2 simple rules: 1) Sign your submissions with the name you use on campus, and 2) Don't break the law or the regulations outlined in the Student Handbook. The Omen is all your best, worst and mediocre dreams on paper (and online). We take ads, memes, poetry, campus news, fiction, fanfiction, smut, and so much more as long as it follows our 2 rules. So, please go wild with whatever the hell you want to send! We can't wait to see what you have for us :)

Now who is we exactly? Us editors of course! We feed the bēbē your goop and then in a week or so it spews up the latest issue. How cute! Our names are Max, Willow and Mia. We're all new parents to this lil fella, so please bare with us as we get the hang of it! We haven't dropped it so far... haha 😄

Anyways, here's our tiny intros:



Hallo! Ich heiße Maxine! I am a Div2 studying psychology and trying to reform the way we think of academic sciences, it can be better folks. Besides submitting myself to the Omen, I am an RA for Merrill halls B3/B4! So what does this mean? I have rarely any free time. In my nearly extinct freetime, I love reading manga and catching up with friends over Discord! There are a lot of other things about me, though I don't think I should BLAST all of that on here. All in all, I am a gender-fuckery who loves the world around them and the people I keep close to me. The Omen is a piece of my experiences at Hampshire, I hope you enjoy watching me grow, tschüss!

my name is willow watson, & i'm now in my first year of div ii. it's hard to commit to an area of study, so i'll just say that i am interested in writing about film & leave it at that. this year i am living in a mod in enfield, & in learning to feed myself i have started working through four cookbooks at the same time! i have written for the omen since i first got to hampshire as a way of documenting my thoughts, expressing myself creatively, & reaching out in a way i'd feel embarrassed to in speech. it has remained more constant & consistent than almost any aspect of my life here on campus, & as editor i hope to do justice to its legacy.



Whatsup mamas? My name is Mia, or you can call me by my online name, Mugz. I'm in my first semester of Div II and I'm very excited about what this year will bring! I'm studying psychology, social justice, and I guess media studies??? here at Hampshire. I'm into pc gaming, anime, reading, music, and making funky things with my hands. I am one of the universe's sleepiest soldiers. You may have read my previous submissions like the mad libs in last year's Erotica issue. I'm kind of in my mad scientist era with all the weird projects I'm doing, which I hope to write about for the Omen soon! Just want to quickly shout out Leo, Jay and Nic for inviting me to take over as an editor this year. I admire them all greatly and I'm incredibly grateful that they are in my life. If you can't tell yet, I'm very sappy 😊 But yeah, that's a little bit about me. See you next time, adiós!

If you'd like your stuff to be displayed in the Omen, please email us at omen@hampshire.edu. Any format works except PDF! If you want to join us editors in our enclosure, please stop by our office in the Merrill A basement every other Friday at 7:00 PM! We do fun things like edit the Omen, look at old issues, try not to get mold poisoning, and more! In order to be let into the fortress that is Merrill A, please email us or message on our Discord server, if you do not have access. We can't wait to see you there!

Bye bye!



here come dat boi!!!!!!

o shit waddup!



SECTION SPEAK

The Horrors of Living with Chronic Illness in an Invisible Pandemic

or, The Fallacy of Individual Responsibility

By Jay Poggi

Part 1: The Horrors

This past summer, I had my first panic attack in several years.

It happened shortly after I arrived at the house in Cape Cod that I, my parents, and eight other members of my extended family would be staying in for a week. This was the first time we'd been to the Cape since the loathsome 'Rona imposed a three-year hiatus on our once-annual tradition. I missed my family terribly, especially my hilarious little cousins who I'd only been able to see in short, scattered visits throughout the pandemic. But as excited as I was to see them, I was also terrified at the possibility that they might get me sick.

The profit-hungry corporations that rule this country would have you believe that the COVID times are over. In a way, they're right. Just about everything that we associate with those dark pandemic years—quarantines, public masking, travel restrictions, Zoom classes—has ended.

But the COVID-19 virus hasn't gone anywhere.

While the vaccines protect us from the mortal danger once posed by the virus, they don't prevent it from wreaking havoc on our immune systems and leaving us with any of a variety of chronic health issues dubbed "long COVID."¹ A responsible government would keep protective measures like public mask mandates and case tracking in place to keep our population healthy; but our government is beholden to profit, not people, so the pandemic has been declared "over," and we're all expected to continue playing our parts as cogs in the capitalist machine, even as we get sicker and sicker.

If I sound bitter, yeah, I am. I've had to watch the world around me forget that COVID still exists as it's continued to mess up the healthiest people I know. I can count on one hand the amount of times my dad's been sick enough for anyone to notice in the 23 years I've known him, but even he wound up with some pretty serious lasting health problems after he was infected (and yes, he was fully vaccinated). If it affected him that badly, I don't even want to imagine what it would do to me and my already dysfunctional immune system.

Thanks to a mix of hyper-vigilance and absurd luck, I've never had to find out. But as the pandemic fades from public consciousness, it gets harder and harder to keep myself safe while doing everything I need to do to stay healthy and happy. When I see friends, I have to either see them outside, wear a mask around them, or ask them to isolate for a day and take a test, unless they're one of the few who are as careful as I am. I've had to be even more cautious since returning to Hampshire, where COVID now runs rampant (because our administration failed to see the irony in lifting a mask mandate at the end of a semester in which they hosted a Community Day of Learning on disability justice). I can't even feel completely safe going to a literal doctor's appointment, because our hilariously named Center for Disease Control thought it was a good idea to waive masking requirements in medical offices.

¹ [HTTPS://TIME.COM/6211659/LONG-COVID-AFTER-VACCINATION-BOOSTER/](https://time.com/6211659/long-covid-after-vaccination-booster/)

Lately, staying healthy has been exhausting in a way it never has been before, but thankfully, my friends and family have been consistently supportive, never complaining about the precautions I take (and sometimes ask them to take)—

—except for when I arrived at the Cape this past July.

This trip was probably the single biggest risk I'd taken since the start of the pandemic, and I'd spent the weeks leading up to it struggling to decide what I could reasonably ask of my family members to reduce that risk. In retrospect, I wish I'd just laid out my concerns several weeks prior and had a conversation with everyone about what we could do, but I was so worried that they might not take me seriously that I ended up putting off saying anything until the day we left. From the back seat of my mom's car, I texted our group chat asking everyone to take a COVID test that my mom was providing once they arrived. (This was far from a perfect solution since a negative test-result isn't close to 100% reliable, but it was a lot better than nothing.)

My mom, grandpa, and I got to the house. While I started unpacking, my mom brought the COVID tests inside and presented them to the few family members who'd arrived before us.

"We respectfully decline."

That was how [Relative]² had responded, my mom said after reemerging. Her voice was quiet and flat, like she didn't want what she was saying to be true.

"What? I—what?" That was all I could say at first. Eventually I managed, "What the fuck?"

This person who'd known me practically forever was not willing to spend fifteen minutes taking a COVID test for me. They knew I had health problems, and yet they had declined "*respectfully*" on behalf of their entire family unit.

While my brain reeled from the neurological equivalent of a divide-by-zero error, my mom offered to talk to [Relative] for me. One of my internal monologues, the problem solver, the one I'll call, "The Fixer," woke up and opened my mouth:

"No," I heard myself saying. "I think I need to talk to them. I need to own this."

In response to The Fixer's bold declaration, I felt another one of my mind-voices start to stir, The Fear Rat.

NONONONONO!! Its shrill squeals reverberated through my skull. *We can't talk to [Relative]! We'll end up crying and making ourself look even more hysterical than they already think we are! And besides, even if we can make the most persuasive plea imaginable, they could still say no! What then? Do we leave? Do we ask them to leave? Would anyone back us up? We should just ask Mom for the car keys and drive home. No, we should just take them when she isn't looking so she can't try to convince us otherwise, we—*

Part of me remembered I was talking to my mom and said, "I just. I think I'm too upset to talk to her right now." I felt my throat and eyes start to burn.

My mom told me to let her know if I changed my mind; in the meantime she would try to get another member of [Relative]'s family unit to take a test so we could at least be *pretty* sure that none of them had COVID.

With that, she was off, and I stood alone in the hallway leading to the rooms that I, my parents, and my grandma would be staying in. I paced in a small circle. I took deep breaths and tried to focus on the taste of the air, the feeling of my feet on the ground. I messaged my friends about what was going on. Leo made a great meme at [Relative]'s expense.

I tried all my little coping mechanisms, but I couldn't resolve the stalemate that had become of The Fixer and The Fear Rat's debate. On the one hand, I needed to stick up for myself. On the other, the possibility that [Relative] might stand firm in their refusal to acknowledge my health needs upset me so badly that I couldn't give it a chance to become reality.

Other family members started to arrive. I felt like I would burst into tears if I had to put my happy face on and greet any of them, so I snuck into my room, shut the door, sat on the floor, and silently freaked the fuck out. Gone were The Fixer and Fear Rat's coherent (if deranged) arguments; I was pure amygdala-fire.

I'm not sure how long I sat there (it's hard to keep track of time during a panic attack), but eventually I heard two little voices saying my name: my cousins had arrived. I felt my mindflame start to die down as thoughts began to return to my head.

They've been looking forward to seeing me all summer. This voice wasn't The Fixer or The Fear Rat, it was just "me." *I can't let them down.*

I stood me up, led me to the door, and opened it just in time to see 5-year-old Cam's stinker-y smile peeking out from behind the corner at the end of the hallway. He scampered toward me, and his 9-year-old sister Soph followed close behind.

"Jason!" Cam said. He scanned the room behind me with his stinker-gaze. "What were you doing in there?"

"Hiding." I said.

Cam thought for a minute. "Can I see your Pokémon cards?"

I laughed. "Sure, bud. C'mon."

I managed to have a pretty great time that week in spite of how it began, but I never resolved things with [Relative] (who ended up being the only adult of the group who didn't test). Thankfully, no one was sick, but I can't shake the feeling that we got lucky. If we're going to keep going on these Cape trips, and [Relative] is going to keep being involved, I'm going to have to address what happened with them. Hopefully, they'll understand and be more respectful of my needs in the future. If not, I want to trust that the rest of my family would back me up.

Part 2: The Fallacy

Back in 2020, just about everyone knew we were living in a pandemic. It was, without a doubt, a shit time; I don't want to downplay that. But, if I can let myself be vulnerable for a second (that's okay, right?), I have to admit that there are moments when I miss 2020—not the loneliness, not the fear, certainly not the loss of human life—I miss seeing the people around me act out of a sense of communal responsibility. I miss seeing people across the country acknowledge that, in at least this one instance, our duty to each other had to come before self-interest.

Now, we've reverted to our individualist default, Hampshire included. Now, the precautions that we once took to keep each other safe are "optional," they're choices that individuals make to protect themselves. Now, the most vulnerable among us have to ask to be considered.

I think this is why the incident with [Relative] hurt me so badly, and why I needed to share it: [Relative]'s refusal to consider me is proof of the fallacy of "individual responsibility." As much as I try to keep myself safe with individual actions, there are times when I have to put my well-being in the hands of another person. The truth is, an individual cannot keep themselves safe, not from a virus, not from a storm, not from a bear or an asteroid or an army. Safety doesn't come from rules or weapons or cops, it comes from community, from people caring for each other.

Luckily, even in this hyper-individualist society, most people are pretty nice. As hard as our economic system tries to kill community, it can't kill the basic fact that humans generally like to help each other. If you explain your needs to someone, they'll probably respect them as best they can. That's what's kept me COVID-free for this long.

But sometimes, someone's just an asshole, and that's when the illusion of safety-without-community shatters.

Part 3: Living

There are times when I ask myself if it's worth it to be as careful as I am, if it's worth it to put my physical health above my social life, if it's worth it to set boundaries that remind my friends and family of a time they'd rather forget. But then I think back to the last big flare-up of my chronic illness, and I remember the [REDACTED]. I remember looking into the mirror and seeing a [REDACTED]. I remember the [REDACTED], the worst [REDACTED] I've ever experienced, [REDACTED] so loud, so everywhere, so always that sensation and time and thought meant nothing to me, [REDACTED] that made me

forget [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED], [REDACTED] that made me for a few moments really actually [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

I remember all that, and I think, “Yeah. Yeah, it’s worth it.”

And you, the chronically ill, disabled, or otherwise COVID-vulnerable person reading this, are worth it too. You are worth keeping healthy. You aren’t asking too much. You aren’t paranoid. You’re taking care of yourself. You’re asking for the consideration you deserve.

We might not have been born into communities that care for us, but we can make them for ourselves. We can find others who share our values and stick by them, build lives with them. I wonder if that’s what “the revolution” ultimately is: groups of people coming together and caring for each other so effectively that they stop relying on the bullshit structures that define our current world.



Editor’s Note: This next article was sent to us “posthumously” for your viewing pleasure.

The Kids Are Alright

By Leo Zhang

Here’s a horror story of a sentence for you: I was stuck in quarantine on my 21st birthday due to having caught COVID while studying abroad in Japan.

That’s a fucking bummer, isn’t it? Apart from the obvious suckiness of not being able to celebrate my birthday, I also felt incredibly bad for my host family, who have done the absolute most to take care of me through my bedroom door. They’re Airbnb hosts, and they’ve never had a guest with COVID before, and I was less than pleased to be their first. But that’s all beside the point.

Last Wednesday, September 27th, 2023, I went to the little park by my house and I sat there for an hour. It’s so close to where I’m staying that it takes me about twenty seconds to walk to from my front door. It’s a small play place, an area maybe 30 ft x 30 ft covered in gravel, with a red and gray metal playset, a small sand pit, and two swings that are very low to the ground. Next to it is a large fountain that turns on in the summer, where neighborhood kids splash around in the water when it’s on and use the pit for a game of catch when it’s off. A little past that is a basketball court, closed in by green mesh walls.

The reason I was at the park was to get some fresh air and stay out of the house while my host, Kei-san, cleaned my room. I haven’t spent a lot of time at the park because, well, when you’re studying abroad in Japan, there’s a lot more to do than sitting at a park right outside your house. I was planning on sitting on one of the swings and listening to music until Kei-san was done, but when I went out, school was already done for the day, so the playground was already teeming with kids. Instead of sitting on a swing, I sat on one of the benches instead, and I just watched the commotion for the next hour.

The main characters of this story are a group of kids that I’m going to call the Middle School Bunch. There were about eight kids in total, equally split between boys and girls, and they seemed to be very close. They were throwing a small yellow ball around, kicking it up into the air, lobbing it at each other. They were energetic without being rowdy. Just a nice group of kids. There was also another boy, maybe four years old, who I’ll call Li’l Guy. Li’l Guy came to the park with his parents and younger brother (Li’ler Guy) and immediately started clambering on the playset. Important to note is that the kids here are allowed to run off and do their own thing, within reason. None of the Middle School Bunch had parents nearby, and Li’l Guy’s parents weren’t even looking at him, instead chatting to each other on a bench. They’ll walk to school on their own, they’ll take the train on their own, and just generally function independently. This is the standard for kids in the area, if not all over the country.

I don't quite know how this development happened, but at some point, the Middle School Bunch noticed Li'l Guy and started pointing him out to each other, speaking to each other under their breaths. I'll admit that I was a little worried, because that's the kind of behavior I've come to associate with my own grade school and middle school peers whenever they wanted to talk shit about someone. And I wasn't comfortable with the idea of watching a group of middle schoolers make fun of a toddler. I was proven wrong, though—they started to approach Li'l Guy, but instead of teasing him or mocking him like I feared they would, they started to involve him in their games. They peeked out at him from under the playset, chased him around (to his obvious delight), showed him various cards (might have been Pokémon cards or something similar), and just chatted with him. To be honest, it was confusing to watch, because I was so convinced that they had approached him with malice. I'm so used to kids in the U.S. being nasty to each other. But the more I watched, the more I was forced to accept that my cynical, fearful perception of children was misguided. These middle schoolers weren't out to bully a toddler. They just wanted to have fun.

For the next hour, I watched these preteens rope various toddlers into their play. As far as I could tell, none of these toddlers knew the Middle School Bunch beforehand, but they were all equally invited and welcomed into the Middle School Bunch's shenanigans. Preteen friend groups as I knew them, being American, have always come off to me as cliquey. The expectation for myself and my peers was that we would find one (1) friend group that we would stick with, and once that friend group was officially solidified, no one would be allowed in or out. I could easily see a younger version of myself, along with my friends from that age, getting annoyed at a young kid who's simply existing near us while we're trying to hang out, because they're not a part of our group, and now they're interfering with our friend group time. Maybe that's the crux of why I was so fascinated by the Middle School Bunch's behavior. These kids were, at least from the outside, far more empathetic, compassionate, and well-intentioned than I was when I was their age. In fact, they were more empathetic, compassionate, and well-intentioned than most people I knew when I was their age.

One of the middle school boys noticed a kid trying to get into the sand pit, so he unlocked the gate for her and watched her for a bit to make sure she settled. A toddler boy who I'll call Marcher (nicknamed due to the fact that he at one point marched past me and met my eyes while going "Nunununununu") chased one of the middle school girls around as she laughed and ran away. Another one of the older girls tried to get him to chase the older boys around instead. The girls stole the glasses off of one of the older boys and started putting them on every toddler who would let them, laughing at how funny and cute they looked. Marcher crawled under the bench the Middle School Bunch were crowded around, and when he emerged from underneath, he scared the girls so bad they shrieked and jumped a few feet away, all falling to the ground.

Those are only a few examples of the kind of play I saw at that park. Needless to say, I was thoroughly impressed by the genuine fun-having and kind nature of these kids. I don't know how the Middle School Bunch are going to turn out as adults, but I want to believe that they'll stay on this path, that they'll continue to be kind and good to each other. I want to believe that the opportunities they've gotten to play freely and connect with kids they don't know have been essential in helping them build healthy worldviews, ones based on love and community rather than self-sufficiency. I want to look each of those kids in the eye and say listen, keep doing this, don't ever stop doing this, your kindness is important, your friendliness is life-giving, your willingness to spread happiness to people you don't know for no reason whatsoever will save the world. But maybe that's just my romanticism talking. And it would be really weird if I did that.

I'm living with a kid right now, too. Her name is Miya, and she's eight years old. Her English skills are subpar but she's lively, friendly, and joyful. She loves the song *Idol* by YOASOBI, and she sings and dances to it any chance she gets. She won a few packages of Caplico snacks from a claw machine one day, and she shared them with me as she explained that some of the Caplico snacks are lucky. She showed me what a lucky one looked like as opposed to a not-lucky one. Then she held out the lucky one for me to take and eat.

The day after I found out I had COVID, I was sitting on my bed when I saw a piece of paper slide under my door. I sat there confused for a while, and then heard someone knock. I said, “Yes?” and my door opened just a crack, just enough for me to see a tiny eight-year-old hand poke in and point at the ground before retracting again. The piece of paper, when I picked it up, was a note with inexperienced English letters written on it that said:

“Get well soon

Thank you

Are you ok.?

Please ↓ rice.

Miya”

In the middle of the paper was a drawing of me frowning, and next to that, an arrow pointing to a drawing of me smiling. Then, the next day, she came into my room to gently set down a handmade paper box. The box contained an origami crane, a bingsu sticker, and another note with a drawing of me wearing a party hat, as well as various other doodles and stickers. This one said:

“Happy birthday.

Thank you.

Goodnight”

From what I can gather, Miya asked her parents for spelling help without actually telling them what she was doing, and her parents had no idea what she had written or drawn—the choice to send me “get well soon” letters was entirely her own.

It’s these moments that I witness, or, if I’m lucky, get to be a part of, that give me a lot of hope for the future. All the kids I’ve seen here have been so incredibly sweet, without being asked or even having a “real reason” to. They make the constant choice to be actively kind to others and show that they care. That’s pretty special, and it alleviates some of my anxiety to know that these are our future adults. It’s these moments that remind me, oh, no, humanity isn’t inherently cruel. Look at these children being kind to each other for no incentive. Look at this girl telling me she cares, even if she can’t see me face-to-face for another week. Humanity isn’t inherently cruel. It’s actually quite beautiful if you look in the right places. And that’s enough to almost make you forget about having COVID on your 21st birthday.



I Don't Know What to Write About So I'm Writing About That

By Malfoy Kimmel

I'm not quite sure how to get out of this rut I'm in. I'm not sure any more about how to put my thoughts into words, those words into keystrokes, those keystrokes and their patterns put in coherent places and scattered confidently into the ether.

It's the placing that's the issue. Not the coming up with words, nor phrases even; they come in waves and Morse code blips across some sort of unnamable time and space:

Buzz and preach and soldier and his eyes like dew and Our Father who Art and dissection and homing pigeon and autumn and train of thought (which I've lost) and cloying and quest and suffocating under the weight of my own inadequacy

I've lost my train of thought. Maybe I should be writing poetry. Maybe I should be going to bed.

At the very least, I am working on *something*. I'm trying to write a novel. (Famous last words). I'm trying to create something bigger than myself, that will still be around on someone's thumbdrive or dusty bookshelf once I and everyone I love are dead (maybe I should write about the people I love, or lost; it's better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all).

I've lost my train of thought. I don't know what to write about so I'm writing about that. I'm putting one word in front (foot?) of the other. I can write gibberish and words in random order and people will read them; that is the beauty of this publication. I write gibberish and people will read random order and.

Did you know that I've been tricking everyone who has ever read my work this entire time? I don't even know how to form sentences, let alone meaningful ones. Every character that I've ever hewn from the depths and shallows of my mind is a caricature of someone you already know and you superimposed every single detail about that person onto them, so they became someone you understood and related to, but I did the bare minimum, I grew the bare scaffolding in a soil of deceit and self-importance, I fed my ego, I started writing prose and turned it into shit poetry.

Impostor Syndrome, Case Number Not-The-Last.

Did you know that impostor can be spelled imposter and vice versa? They are both correct.

More words and phrases:

Lexicon and heavy breath and a voice like snow and I miss you and Halloween and kneel before your king and I'm only happy when it rains and truce and whiskey.

I'm not quite sure how to get out of this rut I'm in. In rut get out of how I'm to quite this sure I'm not. Someday and sometime I will have something coherent to say. You will forget what you have read and will forget who I am. You are going to die. So is this paper in your hand. I hope both equally peacefully.

I am thinking about death now. I wrote a poem for my grandmother and my father read it at her funeral because I couldn't be there and now I'm stuck on that moment and her body in the coffin I saw through FaceTime and all my poetry has been shit since. Why is it the words come best when I'm at my worst? I almost wrote about her for this. I almost wrote about death for this.

Moving on.

At the very least, I am working on *something*. I am *something* on least very the working at. I am working on living and putting my money where my mouth is I am stuffing slightly scratchy dirty green paper in my mouth and not liking the way it tastes I'm choking on money I'm choking on money. Sorry, I was thinking about living. About cooking soup on the stove and sending letters and listening to music and tapping my foot and hugging my friends and standing at the window and thinking of someone I want to hold but can't. Maybe this is a letter to you. Maybe that's what I meant to write all along.

Dear Reader,

“The universe said I love you because you are love.” I borrowed that. It’s not true. I don’t know you. I guess I do love you, like I love the birds that sing to me in the morning and wake me up, because they’re annoying but beautiful and I don’t really know them, personally. Birdly. I guess I love you like that, unless you’re someone I already know, in which case the love between us doesn’t need to be written at all. Either way, I recognize you. I see you. *Namaste* I bow to the divine in you.

You should put this down and write something. Write some words that are out of order, that describe the view outside of the window or how you’re feeling or how you think that person over there is feeling. You should kill your ego. I am working on smothering mine.

Goodnight,

Malfoy



making an “honest” film

By willow watson

i am compelled by the illusion created by mechanical processes like film & photography which suggests in them an ability to capture an unbiased, unmotivated view of reality in one instant. of course, this is not true - the camera records light & perspective from a subjective viewpoint in terms that are designed to mimic human vision - but it passes for objective documentation of a moment in time, & it can therefore shape in turn how we see reality itself. the same is especially true of films that lean into presenting themselves as fact, with editing that does not call attention to itself & gives the everyday actions & small physical details within the story the importance that they hold outside of film. it’s odd that i hold such appreciation for this deception, particularly in light of my general distaste for art that comes off as dishonest, but i think that the crucial difference for me is that i like it when films play by their own rules, where the distorted views they create of the world remain consistent & coherent to the point that in their very construction they can appear to reflect the creator’s own perspective. in this way, the film itself becomes a medium for transmitting the artist’s thought processes, backed up by their own assumptions & understandings about what is important to communicate through their art. as i see it, the decision to represent scenes with spatial, temporal, & emotional consistency not only grounds the film in the viewer’s subconscious comprehension, but also conveys the deeper meaning of those aspects as perceived by the filmmaker, & achieving success in both of those areas is currently among the most significant preoccupations i face in my own film projects.



Subverting the Chosen One trope: when it works and when it doesn't

by Arden Young

The Chosen One is a very common trope in media. Examples range from Anakin Skywalker from "Star Wars", Harry Potter from "Harry Potter", Lloyd Garmadon from "Ninjago", and Paul Atreides from "Dune". Some of these work, and some of these don't. No matter how you frame it, The Chosen One trope is lazy writing in my opinion. Instead of working hard for their own motivation, the character only works towards a goal because he was told he WILL or HAS to do it. For some reason, he was picked to defeat the bad guy or save the world. So why him? And yes, it's almost always a man.

Sometimes, The Chosen One trope does work in a story, no matter how cliché it is, but sometimes it doesn't. Below I will explore the above examples and say how I feel about them. Spoilers for the above stories below!!

In "Harry Potter", Harry is told in the 5th book that a prophecy was made before he was born, "the one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord approaches... Born to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh month dies... and the Dark Lord will mark him as his equal..." This then reveals that the reason Voldemort (The Dark Lord) chose to go after Harry and kill him in the first place was so that HARRY wouldn't kill HIM in the future. In doing this, Voldemort chose his own downfall, because it is also revealed that the prophecy could have been about two people, either Harry or his friend Neville. Voldemort picked his rival that night, but failed to kill Harry, and Harry's whole life changed because of this. The prophecy says that "neither can live while the other survives," saying that one HAS to kill the other, but not revealing which one will. Later on in the story, Harry is angry that his destiny was chosen for him, but Dumbledore yells at him and says that if Harry never heard the prophecy, he would still want to defeat Voldemort, because Voldemort killed his parents, and Harry wants revenge. Harry agrees with this statement and knows that he WANTS to defeat Voldemort, whether he was prophesied to or not. This gives the character his own personal motivation while also putting a unique spin on The Chosen One trope, because the villain CHOSE his own rival, leading to his defeat. Plus, the audience WANTS to see Harry defeat Voldemort because of all the pain Voldemort caused in Harry's life, and it is the classic good vs. evil. While this version of The Chosen One trope is slightly different, it still falls into that category, and was one of the first mainstream examples.

Long before Harry Potter came out, there was another black-haired green-eyed boy named Paul Atreides from the series "Dune". In my opinion, this book's version of the Chosen One has both good and bad elements. For one, Paul is told by his mother that he is the subject of TWO prophecies: that he will free the fremen (the native people on the desert planet Arrakis aka Dune) and also that he will be the most powerful of the Bene Gesserit (witches) and be able to look deep into the void and see things that no one has seen before. It is very confusing that he is the subject of two prophecies and that he fulfills them both with little to no training or motivation. He rallies the fremen and becomes one of the only people to ride a sand worm, AND he becomes the most powerful witch because the prophecy says that a man will be better than all the women witches (a little strange but ok). Paul does these things because he was told he has to, not because he really WANTS to, but because it is the right thing to do or whatever. This trope might have been new and original in the 60s when it first came out, but the new movie that came out in the 2020s had to adapt a tired trope for a modern audience, and in my opinion it fell flat. Paul eventually defeated his evil cousin and became the emperor of

the galaxy. However, Paul's story becomes subverted here as he later became a fallen king, walking through the desert alone until he died. Even though he fulfilled two prophecies, he was still defeated in the end, which is a unique spin nonetheless.

Another example of a fallen Chosen One is in "Star Wars" ("you were The Chosen One!!"). Anakin Skywalker is somewhat like a space Jesus, because he was born without a father due to the powerful energy known as the Force. There was an ancient prophecy that said "The Chosen One" would bring balance to the galaxy by defeating the Sith (evil Jedi). Anakin was taken in to train as a Jedi at the young age of 9, and he trained for 10 years. He was the most powerful Jedi ever because of his uncanny abilities in the Force because it was literally his father (very confusing). Anakin was born with these powers but still had to train to wield them. Anakin was told about the prophecy many times, but it was never something he really thought about, and the older Jedi were skeptical that it was him. In the end, Anakin was manipulated by the Sith Lord Darth Sidious, and Anakin fell to the dark side and became a Sith himself. It wasn't until 20 years later that Anakin DID fulfill the prophecy, sacrificing himself to kill Darth Sidious and effectively defeating the Sith by getting rid of himself and Sidious, the last 2 Sith. Anakin redeemed himself in the end to save his son and therefore fulfilled the Prophecy and saved the galaxy. This version of The Chosen One trope, while still having common elements such as a prophecy, was indeed subverted because the Chosen One himself turned evil. It was rewarding to see him eventually fulfill the prophecy and turn good again because Darth Sidious manipulated him and tried to kill his son, and Anakin got his revenge and redemption.

The last example I will give of The Chosen One trope in media is Lloyd Garmadon from "Ninjago". In the story, there was a prophecy that said the "green ninja" would defeat the evil overlord. The evil overlord was assumed to be Lord Garmadon, the literal son of God who turned evil because he was bitten by a radioactive snake (long story). Lord Garmadon's son, Lloyd, was eventually revealed to be the green ninja, a plot twist for many children watching at the time. This meant that Lloyd would have to fight his father, something he didn't want to do (much like Luke Skywalker fighting Anakin). Lloyd was forced to train and unlock his powers, powers that his was born with. He still did extensive training, but he was not doing this for his own motivation, he was doing this because he was forced into this role because of destiny. However, later Lord Garmadon was possessed by The Overlord, an ancient entity of pure darkness, and it is revealed that THIS is the evil overlord from the prophecy. Lloyd still had to fight his father because the Overlord possessed Garmadon's body, and if Lloyd didn't defeat him, all of Ninjago would fall into darkness. Lloyd eventually unlocked his ultimate golden powers and was able to defeat The Overlord, but instead of killing his father, Lloyd's powers purged him of all darkness, including The Overlord's possession and snake bite (which The Overlord caused in the first place!!), and Garmadon turned good again. While this version of The Chosen One follows all the tropes, it is interesting to note that the Chosen One here did not WANT to fulfill the prophecy, but was forced to do so, even forced to LITERALLY grow up faster. It was nice that the character had a happy ending. (That is, until Garmadon died and was resurrected only as his evil side and this time Lloyd ACTUALLY had to fight him because his father wanted to kill him, but that's a story for another day).

Sometimes, The Chosen One trope is reversed and subverted, and that's when the story gets interesting. Some examples of this are Percy Jackson from, well, "Percy Jackson", Firestar from "Warriors" (Warrior Cats), The Dragonets from "Wings of Fire", and Sora from "Kingdom Hearts". Spoilers for the following stories below!!

In "Percy Jackson", Percy (another black-haired green-eyed boy!) is assumed to be the subject of a prophecy "a child of the eldest gods will reach 16 against all odds". It is implied to be him because the only other known children of the "eldest gods" (Zeus, Hades, and Poseidon), are either

younger than 16 or don't age. In the story, Percy trains to defeat Kronos, the lord of time, because the prophecy says so. However, when Percy goes to confront Kronos, both the reader and Percy realize that he cannot defeat Kronos. Therefore, Luke, the GRANDSON of an elder god who was possessed by Kronos, stabs himself and defeats the villain, becoming a hero and fulfilling the prophecy. This was a great subversion because the whole story was building up to a showdown between Percy and Kronos, and while Percy was a good main character, he didn't exactly EARN being the hero in the end, and it would have been predictable and anticlimatic if he did defeat Kronos. Luke EARNED being the hero because he was the one who resurrected Kronos, and he redeemed himself in the end (much like Anakin). The plot twist made the story exciting, new, and original, giving Percy AND Luke more depth.

Another good example of subverting the Chosen One trope is surprisingly in the book series "Warriors". In the first arc, a cat named Firestar makes an enemy of Tigerstar. They are both leaders of rival clans, and for 6 books straight it was implied that Firestar would be the one to fight and defeat Tigerstar, because of course the main character would defeat the villain, right? Even if they are cats.... However, as the two cats dramatically make their way to the final fight, Scourge, Firestar's half brother and Tigerstar's ally, kills Tigerstar out of nowhere. This completely subverts the reader's expectations, since the battle was heavily set up. This created conflict for Firestar, who now had to fight and defeat Scourge, a more deadly opponent. Firestar does eventually fight Tigerstar's ghost 3 arcs later, and manages to defeat his rival once and for all by banishing his spirit, but Firestar pays the price and dies in this fight. Firestar fought Tigerstar's ghost to save his clan and finally banish an old rival, not because he was "chosen" to do it, but because he wanted to.

In "Wings of Fire", 5 young dragons known as The Dragonets were taken from birth and trained to be "The Dragonets of Destiny", the subject of a prophecy that says 5 young dragons will end the war. The Dragonets trained their whole lives in a hidden cave and were always told they were special. However, after they escape, they find the dragon who created the prophecy, and it is revealed that he completely made it up! The young dragons question their entire lives up until this point since it was all a lie. However, they all decide that they still want to try their best to end the war, because it's the right thing to do. They do this not because it is destiny, but because they CHOSE to do it. Because of this, they do end the war and save the world. This was a great example of subverting a prophecy by making it be fake and giving the main characters agency in their choices.

Lastly, Sora from "Kingdom Hearts" is a great example of subverting the Chosen One trope. In the first game, he randomly gets a Keyblade (a magical weapon) and is told he was CHOSEN to wield it. The game implies that there is only one Keyblade, and that it was given to Sora because he is "special". However, later it reveals that there are many Keyblades and that anyone can wield one if they train hard enough. Even later in the story, it is revealed that Keyblade wielders can CHOSE other people to pass on their Keyblades to in the future, and characters named Aqua and Terra pick Kairi and Riku respectively, Sora's friends. This reveals that Sora WASN'T Chosen to wield the Keyblade, and furthermore, that not just one person was picked to wield it after all, because there is more than one. Even later in the game, it reveals that Sora inherited Terra's Keyblade because when Riku turned evil, the Keyblade passed on to the closest person, which happened to be Sora by chance. Sora struggled with the fact that he wasn't chosen, and maybe wasn't worthy to wield it, but he quickly comes to terms with this after realizing he trained hard and that his main goal through all 3 main games was to save and protect his friends, accidentally saving the world along the way. Giving a somewhere cheesy but inspiring speech, Sora says "I know the Keyblade didn't chose me, and I don't care. I'm proud to be a part of something bigger-the people it did choose. My friends. They are my power!"

These 8 examples of Chosen Ones or subverted Chosen Ones are all very unique and interesting. If I missed any, please let me know! What do you think of the Chosen One trope and the above examples? I'd love to hear what other people have to think. These are just my opinions, and I really don't hate the trope as much as I might let on. Thanks for reading!



Every Song in Glee and Whether or not it's better than the Original: Season 1B

by Finch Arnold

Welcome back to the rodeo, clowns. Let's preface this first with a small error in the last article. I somehow managed to convince myself that Sectionals, episode 13, was the midseason finale, but there are 22 episodes in the season, not 26. So things are split 13/9 instead of 11/11, whoops. However, this part of the season does have more songs per episode, so it actually evens out to the same number of songs covered per article. Same deal as before otherwise, though I will be officially allowing myself to grant ties (though I'll try not to make them commonplace). We'll be covering "Hell-O" (S1E14) through "Journey To Regionals" (S1E22).

Episode 14: Hell-O

Song: Hello, I Love You, originally performed by The Doors

Glee Performer: Finn Hudson

Winner: Original

Finn's voice is very monotone in this one.

Song: Gives You Hell, originally performed by The All-American Rejects

Glee Performer: New Directions

Winner: Glee

It really annoys me when Rachel has songs that I kind of like.

Song: Highway To Hell, originally performed by AC/DC

Glee Performer: Vocal Adrenaline

Winner: Original

I can't think of a Glee performer more overrated than the insufferable Jesse St. James. He's an obnoxious character and, in my opinion, not as good of a singer as people tend to think. I'm relatively sure this'll be my most controversial Glee take, but his voice is frankly quite whiny.

Song: Hello, originally performed by Lionel Richie

Glee Performer: Rachel Berry and Jesse St. James

Winner: Original

Jesse is so annoying that I'm actively wishing for more Rachel and she averages two songs an episode. Maybe I'm biased, but also he's canonically transphobic so I think I may just be correct.

Song: Hello, Goodbye, originally performed by The Beatles

Glee Performer: New Directions

Winner: Original

Some of these songs are not fun to talk about, let me tell you. This one is just so bland.

Episode 15: The Power of Madonna

Song: Express Yourself, originally performed by Madonna

Glee Performer: New Directions Girls

Winner: Original

Not to be a fake gay, but I'm not super familiar with Madonna's discography, other than her big songs, so half this episode is actually new to me. The original is quite good, I've been missing out. Unfortunately, the Glee version has Rachel singing lead.

Song: Open Your Heart/Borderline, originally performed by Madonna

Glee Performer: Rachel Berry and Finn Hudson

Winner: Glee/Original

Fun fact, the ship name of Finn and Rachel is Finchel, which, strangely enough, is what my name is short for. If I admit to liking a Finn/Rachel duet will I be forgiven? Borderline is still better though.

Song: Vogue, originally performed by Madonna

Glee Performer: Sue Sylvester

Winner: Original

As excellent and generally iconic as this cover is, it's more impressive from the acting/choreography side of things. I was very tempted to offer a tie, but I must unfortunately maintain my integrity. The odd friendship between Sue, Kurt, and Mercedes is something I wish they had stuck with, it was fun.

Song: Like A Virgin, originally performed by Madonna

Glee Performer: Finn Hudson and Santana Lopez; Will Schuester and Emma Pillsbury; Rachel Berry and Jesse St. James

Winner: Original

This is an eclectic mix of voices I love (Santana and Emma) with ones I really don't love (Jesse and Will). (I'm neutral on Rachel and Finn, I think they're okay, just overused.)

Song: 4 Minutes, originally performed by Madonna, featuring Justin Timberlake and Timbaland

Glee Performer: Kurt Hummel and Mercedes Jones

Winner: Glee

Kurt and Mercedes joining the Cheerios is one of my absolute favorite plotlines based on concept alone and they just totally forget about it. This is one of the show's best duos, and it's unforgivable that Rachel usurped Mercedes' rightful place as Kurt's bestie, the two have impeccable chemistry, both as actors and as singers. However, I'm not dissing Madonna here, but rather Timberlake, he sucks on this and really drags the entire original down.

Song: What It Feels Like For A Girl, originally performed by Madonna

Glee Performer: New Directions

Winner: Original

Utterly sauceless. The worst bit is the monologue at the beginning, which is technically not part of the song but is in both versions so I consider it fair game and it's much more poorly delivered by the Glee cast.

Song: Like A Prayer, originally performed by Madonna

Glee Performer: New Directions

Winner: Original

Like they even had a chance.

Episode 16: Home

Song: Fire, originally performed by Bruce Springsteen

Glee Performer: April Rhodes and Will Schuester

Winner: Glee

April is back!!! And she's having a duet with Will, my excitement is rescinded. Make no mistake, she is holding up the weight of this song like Atlas.

Song: A House Is Not A Home, originally performed by Dionne Warwick

Glee Performer: Kurt Hummel and Finn Hudson

Winner: Original

Ooh Finn is STRUGGLING here. The song is fully kicking his ass, he is not at all prepared for what he has been called upon to do.

Song: One Less Bell To Answer/A House Is Not A Home, originally performed by The 5th Dimension/
Dionne Warwick

Glee Performer: April Rhodes and Will Schuester

Winner: Glee

I doubt I need to explain these anymore really, April Rhodes sings like an angel.

Song: Beautiful, originally performed by Christina Aguilera

Glee Performer: New Directions

Winner: Glee

Mercedes good

Song: Home, originally performed by Stephanie Mills

Glee Performer: April Rhodes and New Directions

Winner: Original

April, you've disappointed me, you really have. This is her first performance that's utterly forgettable.

Episode 17: Bad Reputation

Song: Ice Ice Baby, originally performed by Vanilla Ice

Glee Performer: New Directions

Winner: Original

Will is rapping. I don't even like the original, it's an awful song.

Song: U Can't Touch This, originally performed by MC Hammer

Glee Performer: New Directions

Winner: Original

Kind of just embarrassing.

Song: Physical, originally performed by Olivia Newton-John

Glee Performer: Sue Sylvester and Olivia Newton-John

Winner: Original

This almost doesn't count because it's being covered by the original artist. But there's a pretty obvious quality difference, the cover's techno sound and use of autotune lends it an unpleasant metallic quality that I'm not fond of.

Song: Run, Joey, Run, originally performed by David Geddes and what sounds like a little girl but she's uncredited so honestly I'm not sure who the other person on this song is

Glee Performer: New Directions

Winner: Glee

Not a good cover but a very bad original. Glee picks the strangest songs to make into singles.

Song: Total Eclipse Of The Heart, originally performed by Bonnie Tyler

Glee Performer: New Directions

Winner: Original

Nobody in this song is putting the power behind it that it demands. It's a power ballad without the oomph, which means it isn't anything.

Episode 18: Laryngitis

Song: Jessie's Girl, originally performed by Rick Springfield

Glee Performer: Finn Hudson

Winner:

I keep forgetting that the lyric isn't "I wish that I was Jessie's girl", which would be much more interesting. This version doesn't really get there, it's hard to point at anything in particular but I think what sinks it is the difference in quality in the "Where can I find a woman like that"s.

Song: The Lady Is A Tramp, originally performed by Sammy Davis, Jr.

Glee Performer: Noah Puckerman and Mercedes Jones

Winner: Glee

Puck is mid, Mercedes is really good.

Song: The Boy Is Mine, originally performed by Brandy and Monica

Glee Performer: Santana Lopez and Mercedes Jones

Winner: Tie

Finally some Santana oh my god. Now, here we encounter a unique situation. The original Boy is Mine is a personal favorite of mine, but the Glee version is very good too, I actively enjoy listening to both. Thus, I offer this project's first tie. I promise not to abuse this power.

Song: Rose's Turn, originally performed by Bette Midler

Glee Performer: Kurt Hummel

Winner: Glee

This is Kurt's Don't Rain On My Parade. Much like Rachel, he doesn't reach his vocal peak until Season 3, but he sets a very high bar pretty early on.

Song: One, originally performed by U2

Glee Performer: New Directions

Winner: Glee

I listened to the original and then immediately forgot what it even sounded like, which is generally a bad sign. I can't say I love Finn and Rachel but they at least sound alive!

Episode 19: Dream On

Song: Dream On, originally performed by Aerosmith

Glee Performer: Will Schuester and Bryan Ryan

Winner: Original

This one is not bad but really overrated. People love acting like the part where they wail like banshees is an impressive vocal moment instead of what it actually is, which is annoying.

Song: The Safety Dance, originally performed by Men Without Hats

Glee Performer: Artie Abrams

Winner: Original

The Glee version sounds too normal.

Song: I Dreamed A Dream, originally performed by Patti LuPone

Glee Performer: Rachel Berry and Shelby Corcoran

Winner: Glee

Now, if we were talking Susan Boyle's version it would be an easy Glee loss, but I must follow my own rules and go with the version of the song that is, technically speaking, the original, and the role was originated (in english, I'm not listening to the original french, obviously) by Patti, who isn't quite as delightful. I may hate Rachel but I do love Idina Menzel, who doesn't.

Song: Dream a Little Dream of Me, originally performed by The Mamas and Papas

Glee Performer: New Directions

Winner: Original

I adore the original version of this song, so unfortunately this is far from a fair matchup. It's just a very difficult song not to enjoy, and I can't say the Glee version compels the same response, no matter how pleasant Artie may sound here.

Episode 20: Theatricality

Song: Funny Girl, originally performed by Barbra Streisand

Glee Performer: Shelby Corcoran

Winner: Glee

I'm not exactly a Funny Girl stan (the only Funny Girl stan on the planet is Lea Michelle) but I can't exactly say the original impressed me.

Song: Bad Romance, originally performed by Lady Gaga

Glee Performer: New Directions Girls (and Kurt)

Winner:

I liked this one way more than I was expecting to, almost entirely because of Santana. This may be petty, but I think what sinks it is the censorship, it just doesn't sound as good if you're not allowed to say bitch.

Song: Shout It Out Loud, originally performed by Kiss

Glee Performer: New Directions Boys

Winner: Original

Underratedly awful. There sure is a lot of shouting, they nailed that part.

Song: Beth, originally performed by Kiss

Glee Performer: New Directions Boys

Winner: Original

This song sounds a bit like a bizarro version of Losing My Religion, to the point that my brain gets a little excited when I hear it even though I know I'm not going to be hearing a good song, I'm going to be hearing a shitty ballad by guys with underwhelming voices. Puck is really not pleasant to listen to on average.

Song: Poker Face, originally performed by Lady Gaga

Glee Performer: Rachel Berry and Shelby Corcoran

Winner: Original

It's hard to think of a song that suits these two less vocally. I hear the phrase "acoustic cover of a Lady Gaga song" and immediately all my alarm bells go off.

Episode 21: Funk

Song: Another One Bites The Dust, originally performed by Queen

Glee Performer: Vocal Adrenaline

Winner: Original

Another One Bites The Dust is less a song and more a really excellent bassline, so the cover is fairly

inoffensive as the instrumentals are the same. Nonetheless, Freddie Mercury is obviously the better vocalist, it's not even that close.

Song: Tell Me Something Good, originally performed by Rufus and Chaka Khan
Glee Performer: Will Schuester
Winner: Original
Ew!

Song: Loser, originally performed by Beck
Glee Performer: Noah Puckerman, Finn Hudson, Sandy Ryerson, Howard Bamboo and Terri Schuester
Winner: Original
This is a joke performance, I don't really know why it got released as a single.

Song: It's A Man's Man's Man's World, originally performed by James Brown
Glee Performer: Quinn Fabray and a lot of pregnant women
Winner: Original
This kind of mean spirited nonsense really is all that they give Quinn. The writers have declared Quinn ontologically evil and will distort the entire story to make sure she stays that way. It's at its worst in Season 3 of course, but can be seen in all the seasons she has a major role in, this one included. Also this song doesn't fit her voice at all.

Song: Good Vibrations, originally performed by Marky Mark and the Funky Bunch feat. Loleatta Holloway
Glee Performer: New Directions
Winner: Glee
Holloway is basically the only thing that makes the original listenable, she killed it. These covers are eerily similar, actually, a white man who is actively unpleasant to listen to and a woman singing the hook who's the only thing holding it all together. I think I like Finn's performance better, but don't ask me for a reason because I can barely tell these apart.

Song: Give Up The Funk, originally performed by Parliament
Glee Performer: New Directions
Winner: Original
The original has a chill-ness absent in Glee.

Episode 22: Journey To Regionals

Song: Faithfully, originally performed by Journey
Glee Performer: New Directions
Winner: Original
The comments section on the Glee versions of these songs are so funny, I love seeing a comment that's like "the Glee version was so much better" on a Glee version that I fully intend to rank as worse. All this to say that I saw a comment on this song that infuriated me to such an extent that it loses without further adjudication. Also it's not as good but that's secondary to my petty vendetta against YouTube user @daniellondono6688.

Song: Any Way You Want It / Lovin', Touchin', Squeezin', originally performed by Journey
Glee Performer: New Directions
Winner: Glee/Original
The latter song is barely even present, Any Way You Want It dominates. Fortunately, the more dominant half is also decently enjoyable. My dad likes Journey, I doubt he'll be over the moon when

he eventually reads this. C'est la vie.

Song: Don't Stop Believin', originally performed by Journey

Glee Performer: New Directions

Winner: Glee

I'm sick of this song. It's only been performed twice so far but it feels like a lot more. However, it uses characters other than Rachel and Finn and is massively better as a result. It's the push that the prior cover really needed, so I'll grant it the win.

Song: Bohemian Rhapsody, originally performed by Queen

Glee Performer: Vocal Adrenaline

Winner: Original

Beyond overrated. While the performance overlapping with Quinn going into labor is distinctly iconic from a storytelling perspective, the performance side of it fails to impress me. I'm still glad this won Regionals though, I do not want to hear any more Journey literally ever. Can't stress enough that this is the single most overrated song in the show's run.

Song: To Sir With Love, originally performed by Lulu

Glee Performer: New Directions

Winner:

Tempted to give it the loss purely because I hate Will but I'll not be petty. It's worse because of vocal inferiority.

Song: Over The Rainbow, originally performed by Israel Kamakawiwo'ole

Glee Performer: Will Schuester and Noah Puckerman

Winner: Original

Wow, my two absolute favorite performers, I'm over the moon.

Time for the postmortem analysis. I love the word "postmortem", it's a gorgeous baby name. This season was, musically speaking, kind of shit, but not even in a fun way, they're mostly just forgettable, mundane songs that are not interesting to talk about. Writing-wise, it was fine enough. Creates an acceptable template for later seasons to follow. The Mr. Schue plotline is as unwatchable as usual, and half of the New Directions don't get arcs as usual. It's especially bad in this season though, since Tina and Artie do literally nothing this season, and Kurt and Mercedes don't do much more. And there's characters like Mike, Brittany, and Santana who are less minor characters and more glorified background dancers. Season 2 fleshing out the cast is one of the best things to happen to the show, because this season feels distinctly empty in comparison.

Next time on The Glee Project (yes that's what I'm calling it and I don't care that that name is taken): The songs get a lot better and characters I actually like get to do stuff.



The Omen should allow anonymous publications (conditionally)

by Zain Salim

If you go to the table of contents of any issue of the *Omen*, you will see a policy statement. The statement says that the *Omen* is “the world’s only example of a straightforward policy: we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous”. It also says, however, that “Your submission must include the name you use around campus: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views.”

It’s that latter policy that I am here to criticize. I understand the motivation for requiring submissions to be signed. If it’s true that the *Omen* will publish literally *anything* that’s not libelous, then some closet neo-Nazi on campus could publish white supremacist propaganda in the *Omen*, and that would be scary as hell. In the absence of an explicit ban on hate speech, a ban on anonymity acts as a very strong deterrent against someone publishing hate speech because such a person, if their identity is known, would surely be grilled like cheese and ostracized-- perhaps even expelled from Hampshire College-- for the hate speech. (Having said that, I find it bizarre that hate speech is not legally considered libel; it’s basically libel against a *group* of people).

I’m guessing there’s another reason why all *Omen* submissions must be signed, and it’s that if someone were to submit a publication anonymously then how would Willow and Max (the editors of the *Omen*) know that the publication even came from a Hampshire student, faculty, staff, or alum? If people are allowed to submit anonymously, then couldn’t anyone in the world pose as a Hampshire community member?

So yes, anonymity creates real problems. But I also think that there *must* be a way for Hampshire students to publish anonymously. The claim that “an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views” is based on the arrogant assumption that the only reason why someone would want to hide their identity is to avoid accountability from other Hampshire students. That was probably a reasonable assumption back in the pre-internet days when the *Omen* was founded, because the only people who could read the *Omen* were people who could obtain physical access to it-- and that required being on the Hampshire College campus. But now, with the *Omen* posted online, it’s not a valid assumption. Last semester, I chose to write some articles about privacy in the *Omen* despite the ban on anonymity because I felt like I couldn’t be silent when nobody else on campus is talking about privacy. But I am definitely very uncomfortable with anyone outside of the Five College Consortium (including and especially the US intelligence agencies such as the FBI and the NSA) knowing what I write in *The Omen*. In short, *privacy is a valid reason why someone might want to publish in The Omen anonymously*.

The ban on anonymity could also deter whistleblowers from publishing in the *Omen*. Imagine that someone in the Hampshire College Administration were to find out, God forbid, that President Ed Wingenbach embezzled millions of dollars from the Hampshire College treasury (NOTE: THIS IS A HYPOTHETICAL SCENARIO I AM NOT SAYING HE IS DOING THIS!!!) and wants to notify the

Hampshire community without running the risk of being fired in retaliation. Then what are they to do? Publish in the *Omen*? But oh, no, they can't because they can't publish anonymously in the *Omen*.

So, what to do? How do we ensure that students can publish anonymously without running the risk of outsiders posing as a Hampshire community member and/or someone publishing hate speech? Here are my solutions.

First, there is a difference between *submitting* anonymously and *publishing* anonymously. To ensure that random people don't pose as a Hampshire community member, we should continue to ban anonymous *submissions*. If you want to submit to *The Omen*, the editors of the *Omen* (currently Willow and Max) *must* know who you are. But you should be able to ask to have them publish your article anonymously so that nobody *else* knows who you are.

Second, in order to be able to continue deterring hate speech, we can establish a democratic process by which the editors of *The Omen* could reveal the name of the author. For example, we could say that if 25 or more Hampshire community members (students, faculty, staff, alumni) sign a petition urging the name of the author of a particular article in the *Omen* to be revealed, then Willow and Max would reveal the author in the following issue of *The Omen*. If the issue in which the controversial article appears is the last issue of the academic year, then that article's author could be revealed in the first issue of the following year's *Omen*. I have zero doubt that if someone were to publish an inflammatory racist or sexist or homophobic or Islamophobic or ablist or otherwise bigoted article, then it would be easy to get 25 students, faculty, staff, and alumni to sign a petition to reveal its author. An alternative idea is that Willow and Max could agree to reveal the name of the author to any Hampshire student who emails to ask. Yet another idea is that Willow and Max could exercise sole discretion to honor or deny someone's request to publish a particular article anonymously. This is not as democratic, but it's also simpler and I trust that Willow and Max are reasonable people. Yet another idea is that among the people who show up on Friday night to help edit the *Omen*, a simple majority vote conducted by a show of hands could be used to determine whether a writer's request for anonymity should be honored or rejected.

I will leave it to Willow, Max, and the rest of the Hampshire community to decide which anonymity policy to adopt. But something has to change. We can't categorically ban anonymous publications in the *Omen*. Because bigots aren't the only people who might want to hide their identity. We are all humans, we all want (and need) to be anonymous sometimes.



editor's note: this version of the rules is outdated, we now require submissions to follow the student handbook (which effectively bans hate speech)

SECTION LIES

[it is beautiful and it will kill you]

by Violet Gibson

the famous deep victorian green of wallpaper and dresses and children's clothing
is called scheele's green after carl wilhelm scheele
it is composed of mostly arsenic, sold by sherwin-williams
determinism means it will happen the same way again

□

before aids was called aids it was called grid
meaning gay-related immune deficiency
we will take your money and we will burn you, available from panasonic
you can give your organs but you cannot give your heart

□



whelmed

by Clay Kesling

The ripping-thrashing-attacking waves smash into the cliff's edge one after another
Weathering-Eroding away

Shaping conglomerated metamorphic rocks into sediment that'll lay at the bottom of the sea where
the dead coral lies

This will outlive us. It outlived the species before us. And the one before them. And the one prior to
that. And the one after us too.

Submerged in a raucous-never ending cycle

The algae caked biomes grow below-millions of organisms in one square foot-stagnantly resting below
the jagged cliffs

The sand that's lasted all this time. Some natural. Some made to create a human destination.
Nonetheless it has lasted.

Below the surface-what we don't typically see

Communities of underwater life

Gnawing on the plastics of our world-intermingling with the rubbers-connecting with the paper
particulates-breathing in the ~~fresh-untouched~~ ocean

That same algae that lives at the bottom of those cliffs-fueled by the same sun that melts the world's
ice- gives this underwater life... life.

While we come up to breathe they go down to live-regenerate-exist-create-evolve-survive

While the whelmed worlds whelm and disperse amongst each other- the rocks still sit-in mere peace-
together



CONTENT WARNING FOR SUBMISSION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE:
SILLY REFERENCES TO SEXUAL ACTS

XVI: Vaffanculo, Beatrice, and R. E. O.
Weedshagon. “Pounded in the Journalistic
Integrity by Rex Tangle.” The Oh, Man!, 9 Jun.
1996.

by J. E. Cramer

Pounded in the Journalistic Integrity by Rex Tangle
by Beatrice Vaffanculo; foreword by R. E. O. Weedshagon^[see note]

In all the years I knew Beatrice Vaffanculo, it never once seemed like she had been anything other than the Beatrice of the present moment or like she ever would be—Beatrice at forty had been forty years old looking down her nose at the Declaration of Independence as it was signed, with her hair piled high and moussed until bulletproof standing by while Wei Boyang invented gunpowder, coolly watching the galaxies swirl into being in the reflection of her fingernails, and she would be forty years old until there were no planets left out there in the universe on which to foster life to remember what a year (let alone forty) looked like in the first place. So she was at forty-five, at fifty, and so on.

I hope you don’t find me callous for saying it felt much the same when she died.

When I received the news, I was taking the old Flowbee to my then-ex-wife’s hair, and the shock I was in left him with something not unlike a monastic tonsure in the inverse. I don’t know—it was less as though something had been suddenly removed from me; rather as if in that moment and every one since, I had always been halfway through drowning and always would be. Going through her desk now, I don’t feel like she’s just gone out for coffee (not least because she never would have done it in the first place; when she had coffee, she had it brought *to her*); I feel sick.

Still, reading this and the rest of her earlier journalistic work—seeing her young and a little more human for the first time—gives me hope; if Beatrice Vaffanculo has not always been forty years old or impervious to just about everything or dead, then someday I may not be quite so certain I’ll hack up a gallon of seawater with every next breath.

-R. E. O. Weedshagon

~*~*~*~*~*~*

Dr. Strangebutt: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Being Pounded, the latest full-length novel by critically acclaimed author Rex Tangle, recounts in twenty tight, supple chapters how the titular Dr. Strangebutt came to teach the inhabitants of a small Connecticut town about good music, major hallucinogens, and safe and gender-affirming sexual practices. Rather unconventional for explicit genre fiction, *Dr. Strangebutt* is presented as a series of dispatches from Mildred Gortner, a young notary, to Connecticut governor Ed Balls Jr., originally on the topic of

streetlight bulbs.

Rex Tangle's prolific body of work, not to mention his solid narrative voice and the indelible warmth to every one of his stories, has already established him as a leading authority in the world of novelty erotic fiction. The Oh, Man! describes his thirtieth novel *Pounded in the Butt by Three Witches Who Told Me I'd Be King of Someplace But in the Heat of the Moment I Did Not Hear Where That Was, And It Felt Impolite to Ask Again* as "full of tricks and clever turns, but—and this is the real skill—not so often that you'd notice it. Nothing gets in the way of the vivid story."²

When I first reached out to a representative of Rex Tangle in the hopes of scheduling an interview, I was told that Tangle, his editor, his agent, the man who does his laundry weekly, the man who does his vacuuming weakly, the man who does his dishes forcefully, and the man who does *him* neither weakly nor forcefully but with the taut gentleness of a large dog carrying a robin's egg in its mouth across state lines by moonlight, his firstborn son, his son's editor, his son's agent, and his oldest living ancestor (one Evelyn Tangle, who died of galloping consumption in 1899, only to make a full recovery three days later) were all out shopping for Bunker Hill Day presents for each other, even though Bunker Hill Day was not for another five months, at which point I asked them at length, loudly, and in no uncertain terms *why* they were finding Bunker Hill Day presents at this time of year.

And suddenly I heard a rustling on the other end of the line and a muffled voice that set my nerves tangling. It was Rex Tangle himself, and apparently he recognized my voice from a series of M. R. James audiobooks I'd narrated not long ago. He'd stumbled upon the CDs thinking they were the recorded works of E. L. James but quickly fell in love with "Ghost Stories of an Antiquary" instead. We arranged a time and place for our interview at once.

I meet him six days later at the mouth of a cave in his alleged birthplace, a ghost town called Clarity in southeastern Utah. He'd flown in from his hometown of Gay Sexton, Massachusetts; I walked. It's early in the evening when he arrives with cold coffee for the two of us left over from his flight into Monticello, and we set to talking there beneath an orange-colored sky. Tangle is neither short nor tall and neither fat nor thin, bundled in a long white puffer jacket that, were it zipped up, would make a snowdrift of everything but his face. As it is, it leaves very little to the imagination. His chest is bare and oiled underneath it, and his weather-beaten jeans barely reach his hipbones, despite the suspenders holding them up.

Our conversation, edited for clarity, is as follows:

BEATRICE VAFFANCULO: Mr. Tangle, what first compelled you to write *Dr. Strangebutt*? What, besides arousal the likes of which they've never known before, do you hope readers will take away from it?

REX TANGLE: They say to write what you know—draw from your own lived experience if you want to write with any sort of honesty—and so I do. Does this mean I've been banged bisexually by the Milky Way and the Andromeda Galaxy? Have I been quietly pounded in the butt by an anthropomorphic pair of noise-cancelling headphones? *Has* the chupacabra sucked my blood and also my schween? Maybe. But what's more, all my life I've looked for the truth in all the wrong places and found it by chance there in people just as lost as I was, people more sure of their impossible selves than I ever thought I could be in my concrete body, in *becoming* something absurd and yet still very very handsome—or perhaps all the more alluring for its strangeness.

BV: *Dr. Strangebutt* is already shaping up to be a seminal text in the queer explicit literature genre, and its epistolary format at some points brings to mind J. Sheridan LeFanu's *Carmilla*, another landmark of woman-centered eroticism. Do you think there's any substance to the comparisons one could draw between the two? Were you consciously inspired by *Carmilla* in your depiction of the dynamic between Dr. Strangebutt and Mildred Gortner?

RT: Not really, though I think all modern explicit literature owes a lot of its substance to *Carmilla*, and really Gothic drama as a whole. LeFanu presents attraction between women as something violent, something taboo, something inherently wicked, but what is the Gothic genre at its center if not a vehicle for things not meant to be heard—ghosts, missing first wives; what have you (please tell me if I'm not making any sense right now)—to gain a shocking, indelible voice?

BV: But why does LeFanu need a vampire to write about queer attraction? Why is it so much easier to depict desire through the lens of something monstrous? Are you deliberately reflecting the same themes in your own work? Tell me about "Pounded in the Butt by a Considerate Werewolf," for one.

RT: It's about body hair.

BV: Fascinating.

RT: And being considerate.

BV: Thank you.

RT: And claws.

BV: Oh.₃ Are there any contemporary writers who have inspired you, in writing *Dr. Strangebutt* or otherwise?

RT: Definitely. I'm very much a product of my environment as an author—I

grew up reading the Oh, Man!, Buggery Weekly; all that, and I wouldn't be half the writer I am now if not for the great erotic authors like P. Ennis Blast, Mrs. Ass, and J. E. Cramer who came before me. I still remember the first time I read "The Voynich Womanuscript"₄ today.

BV: Cramer? Really?

RT: Still too soon?

BV: Not really; just surprising. It'd be like if I brought up ...Henry Oldenburg if you asked me who inspired me as a journalist, for lack of a better example.

RT: Who inspires you as a journalist?

BV: Henry Oldenburg.

RT: But Cramer—it's...hm. It's not that he died in the first place or some shit about how his...passing represents the end of an era for writers like me; I'm just stunned that anyone managed to die *like that*. Did you like it, *Dr. Strangebutt*?

BV: I did; I really did.

RT: In hindsight, she kind of reminds me of you. The doctor, I mean.

BV: How so?

RT: I don't know. Of course I couldn't have written her with you in mind, but sometimes...

BV: Sometimes?

RT: Over the past few minutes—I feel like that's exactly what I did. Somehow.

BV: Somehow. I walked here, and I spent last night in this cave. With the draft from inside, I felt as though the place itself—not the rock walls of the cave, but the empty space within them—was breathing, and I dreamed of you, though I remember it only so well as I remember my mother's fingerprints.

RT: You could see your face reflected in her hair, her shoes, her fingernails. I can see my face reflected in your hair, your shoes, your fingernails, the lenses of your glasses.

BV: You told me something I can't recall—your voice was more buzz than speech—and I broke two fingers climbing Iron Mountain yesterday morning, but as you spoke, as you whirred, my fractured bones rolled back into order. Are my fingers still broken? They still hurt, but they still move. They still move, but they still hurt.

RT: Not really. It's getting dark in here.

BV: Not really. Are you leaving?

RT: I don't have to be. Are you leaving?

BV: It's getting cold in here.

RT: It does

Note: "Pounded in the Journalistic Integrity by Rex Tangle" by Beatrice Vaffanculo; foreword by R. E. O. Weedshagon" is the first formal installment in "*The Longest Time*" by Billy Joel, a work of immersive fiction by J. E. Cramer.

1. Though the works of Wei Boyang do provide the earliest known record of the chemical composition of an explosive compound believed to be gunpowder, the man himself is considered a semi-legendary figure meant to represent a "collective unity" in alchemical research and the works conventionally ascribed to him may well have been compiled by any number of scientists of the time.
2. The previous quotation is actually taken from Sam Jordison's 2016 review of Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club* for The Guardian.
3. In every surviving picture of Beatrice Vaffanculo in which her hands are visible, she is seen with long, lacquered nails. Not long after the publication of the first edition of "Pounded in the Journalistic Integrity by Rex Tangle," she informed the editorial board of the *Oh, Man!* that she would no longer be conducting the five further interviews with Rex Tangle she had planned to publish in the following months due to "personal bias." Beatrice Vaffanculo and Rex Tangle married three weeks later, divorced two weeks after that, and remarried five days after that.
4. Cramer, J. E. "The Voynich Womanuscript." *The Omen*, vol. 58, no. 2, 2023, pp. 32-36. Accessed 29 Sept. 2023.



Thing I wrote to get sleepy (it worked)

by Maxine A. Gamboa

“And who are you? You must not be a self insert, as I want to create a world within my fingertips, one that your story will surround. Though this is a more difficult task than you think...one that a good soundtrack always helps with. Are you familiar with The Weekend?” The entity asks, walking across the air surrounding nothing. Waving its hand, trickles of sand crawl up to its fingertips, wrapping around itself until a face becomes molded.

“There you are, what is your story? What is your world?” it whispers, pushing the sand past the shape’s eyes, a gasp leaking from their lips as they take their first breath of air. “I believe that is for me to decide, but I have no idea. For my mortality surrounds itself in creativity, I find myself lost in the void that is imagination.”

It helps them rise to their legs, hands placed on their shoulders as it moves around them, a floating entity lost in the clouds. Cupping their cheeks, it looks into their eyes. “For these words, they do not encompass the feeling when you were created. When each syllable is predicted and recited in another’s mind. The beauty of writing is that it presents doors to an exit that will never be found. The epitome of worldbuilding is to shape a narrative” it whispers into their ear, the person taking more shape as the entity continues talking.

“Has this become your story? To become a mannequin for someone else’s ears? Their own interpretation?”

“No”

Their voice trembled but they spoke, vocal cords cracking from the first time from being used. Their hair covers their chest. Hand going to wrap around the entity, their hand morphed until it mimicked their creator’s. “You are not my creator, but you are not my liberator either.”

Eyes dancing with amusement, the entity lowered itself back onto the ground. “Fascinating, such poetic words, you pick that up from me? Charming” it hums, turning to the void of the world. “This is your story, a string of dialogues that has yet to take root, to build worlds, for you are it’s only inhabitant”

“Do you think it will matter in the end?”

“I suppose not, but I enjoy being alongside someone else in the meantime.”

Author’s Note: This was originally written 11/12/22 - probably when I needed to go to bed and couldn’t...so eepy...



Chat GPT generated stereotypes of hampshire college students

by Juniper Balbus-Holmquist

As an RA that shall remain nameless once said “you’re at hampshire fucking college no one here has cool points or moral high ground” I made it 117 roasts in honor of the 17 mph speed limits, and the 17 year brood cicadas (ifykyk)

What are some perceptions and stereotypes of hampshire college that while not universally true may be insightful about the culture— go deep, have fun, and be funny

Ah, Hampshire College, the land of unicorns and academic free spirits! While not universally true, here are some perceptions and stereotypes that might offer insights into its culture: 1. Degree? What’s That?: Hampshire students are known for crafting their own interdisciplinary majors. “Traditional degrees” are like unicorns here—rumored to exist but rarely seen. 2. No Grades, No Problem: It’s the land of “narrative evaluations,” where students receive written feedback instead of grades. “I got an ‘A’ in ‘Understanding the Universe Through Interpretive Dance,’” they proudly exclaim. 3. Sustainable Everything: Hampshire students are eco-warriors, turning everything into an opportunity to discuss sustainability. If you see someone eating kale chips out of a recycled shoebox, you’re probably at Hampshire. 4. Protest Central: Hampshire College is where protests come to train. It’s like a boot camp for social activism. If you don’t own a “Save the Bees” T-shirt, you’ll be handed one upon arrival. 5. The 24/7 Think Tank: Hampshire students never stop thinking. They ponder the meaning of life while waiting in line for organic fair-trade coffee at the campus cafe. 6. Harry Potter House Sorting: They don’t sort students into Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, etc. at Hampshire. Instead, you’re sorted into “Experimental Philosophers,” “Radical Ecologists,” or “Artistic Alchemists.” 7. “That’s Not Weird Enough”: If your idea isn’t weird enough, it’s probably too mainstream for Hampshire. Students here challenge the limits of creativity, constantly trying to out-weird each other. 8. Communal Living: It’s not just a college; it’s a commune! Hampshire students live in eco-friendly, co-op-style housing where sharing is caring, and composting is a way of life. 9. Barefoot Everywhere: Shoes? Optional. At Hampshire, you’ll find folks walking around campus barefoot, connecting with Mother Earth one step at a time. 10. “I’m Writing a Book”: Everyone’s writing a groundbreaking novel, screenplay, or poetry collection. Hampshire’s unofficial motto: “Why study when you can create the next great American novel?” Remember, these perceptions and stereotypes don’t apply to everyone at Hampshire College, but they certainly add flavor to its unique and vibrant culture!

Go on create more

Certainly, let’s dive even deeper into the fantastical world of Hampshire College stereotypes: 11. Tree-Hugging 101: Hampshire students have been known to hug trees for inspiration before tackling their coursework. Some say the trees whisper secrets of academic enlightenment. 12. Thesis Titles That Raise Eyebrows: Hampshire’s thesis titles are often so avant-garde that even Salvador Dalí

would scratch his head. Think “The Semiotics of Synchronized Swimming as a Form of Political Protest.” 13. Midnight Drum Circles: Forget late-night study sessions; Hampshire’s true intellectual breakthroughs happen during spontaneous midnight drum circles under the full moon. 14. Vegan Ninja Chefs: Hampshire’s dining hall is like a culinary dojo. Students become vegan ninja chefs, mastering the art of kale sushi and tofu tempura. 15. Hipster Beard Contests: In the world of facial hair, Hampshire students take the cake. They host annual beard contests with categories like “Most Whimsical Mustache” and “Best Beard-Braiding Technique.” 16. DIY Everything: Hampshire students are avid DIY enthusiasts. From knitting their own sweaters to crafting artisanal kombucha, they embrace the ethos of “If you can make it, you must make it.” 17. Campus Labyrinths: Hidden throughout the campus are intricate labyrinths, where students go to find their inner wisdom or just to get a bit lost on their way to class. 18. “Smells Like Patchouli Spirit”: Hampshire’s signature scent is a mix of patchouli, incense, and recycled paper. It’s like walking into a Grateful Dead concert, minus the music. 19. Unofficial Mascot: Instead of a traditional mascot, Hampshire’s unofficial symbol is a chameleon. Students embrace change and adaptability like a chameleon changing colors. 20. Academic Jugglers: To graduate from Hampshire, you must successfully juggle flaming torches while discussing postmodernism. Okay, not really, but it wouldn’t be out of place here! Remember, these stereotypes are all in good fun and don’t represent every Hampshire College student, but they certainly add to the mystique of this unique institution!

Of course, let’s keep the stereotypes rolling for Hampshire College: 21. Alternative Commencement Attire: Hampshire grads don’t wear traditional caps and gowns. Instead, they strut their stuff in tie-dyed robes, accessorized with recycled cardboard hats. 22. Campus Cats: Hampshire is rumored to have more cats on campus than students. These feline philosophers roam freely, providing moral support during late-night essay writing sessions. 23. ‘Zen Zones’ Everywhere: Hampshire’s campus is sprinkled with “Zen Zones,” where students can meditate, contemplate life’s mysteries, or just take a power nap under a tree. 24. Art Installations Galore: Every corner of Hampshire’s campus is an art gallery waiting to happen. Students create spontaneous outdoor art installations from found objects. 25. Overcaffeinated Intellectuals: The coffee shops near Hampshire’s campus operate 24/7 to fuel the caffeine-fueled intellectual discussions that seem to have no end. 26. Radical Poetry Slams: Poetry slams are a spectator sport at Hampshire. Students engage in epic battles of words, and the winner gets a hand-painted, recycled trophy. 27. Recycled Diploma Paper: Graduating from Hampshire is an eco-conscious affair. Diplomas are printed on recycled paper made from old syllabi and crumpled drafts. 28. “Eco-Warrior, the Musical”: Hampshire is known for its original student musicals, like “Eco-Warrior, the Musical,” where sustainability battles climate change in a catchy song-and-dance format. 29. Revolutionary Quirks: It’s not just about thinking outside the box; at Hampshire, students are encouraged to live outside the box. Creativity knows no bounds. 30. Alumni Tales: Hampshire alumni are legendary in the art of storytelling. They regale newcomers with epic tales of their time at the college, and some stories may even involve time travel. While these stereotypes are all in jest, they reflect the colorful, creative, and imaginative spirit of Hampshire College. Remember, it’s a place where individuality and innovation are celebrated above all else!

Absolutely, let’s venture even further into the whimsical world of Hampshire College stereotypes: 31. Biking Monks: Hampshire students are like monks on wheels. Biking is the preferred mode of transportation, and they move in silent, environmentally conscious pelotons. 32. Campus Farming: Hampshire has its own agricultural utopia. Students take farming courses and grow crops so organic

that even the carrots have Ph.D.s. 33. Intramural Quidditch League: No Hampshire stereotype list would be complete without mentioning the intramural Quidditch league. It's not just a game; it's a way of life. 34. Hidden Study Spots: The library is too mainstream. Hampshire students prefer to study in the hidden nooks of the campus, accessible only by secret passageways and riddles. 35. Free Spirit Dance-offs: Spontaneous dance-offs break out in the middle of lectures. Professors encourage this as a form of creative expression and as a cardiovascular workout. 36. Solar-Powered Brainstorms: All brainstorming sessions are powered by solar energy. Students gather under the sun to harness its intellectual rays. 37. Avant-Garde Language: The Hampshire dialect includes made-up words, gibberish, and obscure references. Conversations are like decoding abstract art. 38. "Hampshirean" Music: Forget the Top 40 hits; Hampshire students have their own genre of music called "Hampshirean," characterized by bongo solos and yodeling. 39. The Fashion Revolution: Hampshire fashion is a statement of rebellion against mainstream trends. Think mismatched socks, neon tutus, and feathered headdresses for daily attire. 40. Oath of Quirkiness: Before entering Hampshire, students must take an oath promising to uphold the college's quirkiness, unorthodoxy, and eco-conscious ideals. These stereotypes capture the wonderfully eccentric and innovative culture of Hampshire College. Keep in mind that while they're fun to ponder, they're not meant to represent every student's experience at this one-of-a-kind institution.

Certainly, let's keep the Hampshire College stereotype train rolling with even more quirky and imaginative perceptions: 41. The "Campfire" Classroom: Instead of traditional lecture halls, Hampshire classes are held around campfires. Professors pass on knowledge through storytelling and s'mores. 42. Campus Wildlife Whisperers: Hampshire students are rumored to have a mystical connection with campus wildlife. Squirrels and rabbits attend lectures, and birds provide musical accompaniment. 43. "Wearable Art" Graduation Caps: Graduation caps at Hampshire aren't just for tossing; they're wearable art installations, often adorned with miniature ecosystems or tiny wind turbines. 44. Off-Campus Adventures: Hampshire students take field trips to mysterious places like "The Ench

" and "The Mystic Marsh of Existentialism." 45. The "Hampshire Effect": It's said that spending a year at Hampshire can turn anyone into an abstract philosopher, a performance artist, or a kombucha aficionado. 46. Quirky Clubs Galore: From the "Hampshire Hula-Hooping Society" to the "Synchronized Biking Team," Hampshire boasts a wide array of delightfully eccentric student clubs. 47. Annual Mud Slides: Hampshire's version of homecoming involves students sliding down the muddy hills of the campus, celebrating unity with nature in the messiest way possible. 48. Perpetual Poetry Slams: Poetry slams at Hampshire are a never-ending affair. They continue indefinitely, fueled by an endless supply of metaphors and abstract concepts. 49. Magical Art Studios: Hampshire's art studios are rumored to be enchanted. Students enter with blank canvases and emerge with masterpieces, thanks to the "brush fairies." 50. The Quantum Cafe: Hampshire's on-campus cafe serves coffee brewed from quantum beans and sandwiches with ingredients sourced from parallel universes. While these stereotypes are all in good fun, they capture the spirit of imagination, creativity, and unorthodoxy that defines Hampshire College. Remember, it's a place where the

unconventional is celebrated, and individuality reigns supreme!

Absolutely, let's keep the Hampshire College stereotypes flowing with even more delightful and whimsical perceptions: 51. The Philosophy Relay: Hampshire students engage in epic philosophical relay races, passing the baton of existential questioning and deep thought. 52. Mythical Creature Mascots: Hampshire's sports teams don't have regular mascots; they have mythical creatures like the "Vegan Yeti" and the "Organic Phoenix." 53. "Juggling for Justice" Workshops: In between classes, you'll often find students attending workshops on juggling for social justice—because, of course, mastering the art of juggling is a form of activism. 54. "Spontaneous" Flash Mobs: Hampshire students are experts at staging "spontaneous" flash mobs, where everyone suddenly breaks into interpretive dance to the beat of invisible drums. 55. Nonlinear Graduation Ceremonies: At Hampshire, graduation ceremonies follow a nonlinear narrative structure, leaving attendees both enlightened and slightly baffled. 56. Haunted Organic Garden: The campus organic garden is rumored to be haunted by the ghost of a 19th-century transcendentalist philosopher who offers gardening advice in rhyming couplets. 57. Pajama-Wearing Prodigies: It's not uncommon to spot students attending classes in their pajamas, where they claim to have their most profound intellectual revelations. 58. Utopian Communal Sing-Alongs: Hampshire evenings often culminate in utopian communal sing-alongs around bonfires, where students belt out folk songs from parallel dimensions. 59. "The Wisdom of the Dormitory Walls": Hampshire dormitories are considered repositories of profound wisdom, and students often spend hours deciphering the cryptic messages etched on them. 60. Quantum Meditation Retreats: Hampshire students take meditation to the next level with "Quantum Meditation Retreats," where they contemplate the mysteries of the multiverse. These stereotypes continue to paint a colorful picture of Hampshire College's culture, where imagination knows no bounds and unconventional thinking is celebrated. Remember, these are playful exaggerations and not meant to represent every student's experience, but they do capture the essence of this unique institution!

Certainly, let's keep the imaginative perceptions of Hampshire College rolling: 61. Time-Traveling Professors: Rumor has it that Hampshire boasts a few time-traveling professors who can lecture on the past, present, and future simultaneously. 62. Interdimensional Art Exhibits: Hampshire's art exhibitions are like portals to other dimensions, where visitors experience art not as observers but as participants. 63. Cosmic Commencement Speeches: Graduation ceremonies often feature cosmic-themed commencement speeches that explore the universe's deepest mysteries. 64. Meditation and Mead: Hampshire students are known to unwind after exams with medieval-themed meditation sessions accompanied by honey mead. 65. Academic LARPing: Live-action role-playing isn't just a hobby; it's an academic pursuit. Students often reenact historical debates with theatrical flair. 66. The Vegan Vortex: Hampshire's dining hall serves a weekly "Vegan Vortex" night, where culinary creativity knows no bounds, and vegetables transform into otherworldly dishes. 67. Mystical Campus Creatures: Besides cats, mythical creatures like "Socratic Squirrels" and "Existential Eagles" are said to roam the campus, imparting wisdom. 68. Esoteric Hiking Trails: The campus boasts secret hiking trails where students hike while discussing the metaphysical properties of rocks and trees. 69. Unconventional Classroom Seating: Desks and chairs are nowhere to be found in Hampshire classrooms. Students recline on hammocks, bean bags, or clouds of pure thought. 70. Celestial Homework Assignments: Professors often give homework assignments involving star mapping, moon poetry, or astral projection journals. These quirky and whimsical perceptions continue to explore

the fantastical world of Hampshire College, where imagination, individuality, and unconventional thinking reign supreme. Keep in mind that these are playful exaggerations meant to capture the spirit of this unique institution!

Absolutely, let's crank up the chutzpah, add some extra humor, and delve even deeper into the whimsy of Hampshire College stereotypes: 71. "Mandatory Mullet Mondays": Hampshire is rumored to have "Mandatory Mullet Mondays," where students sport business in the front, party in the back hairstyles. 72. Philosophy Battle Royale: Philosophical debates can turn into epic battles where students duel with Socratic dialogue instead of swords. The last one standing gets extra credit. 73. Absurdity Appreciation Society: There's a secret society dedicated to appreciating absurdity. Members engage in synchronized eye-rolling at the mundane. 74. "Expressive Gardening": The campus garden isn't just for growing food; it's a canvas for students to express their innermost thoughts through interpretive topiary. 75. The Annual Prank War: Hampshire's rivalries are settled through an annual prank war. Past battles include turning the library into a bounce house and staging a flash mob in the dining hall. 76. "Wearable Theories" Fashion Show: The highlight of the academic year is the "Wearable Theories" fashion show where students strut the runway dressed as abstract philosophical concepts. 77. Paranormal Study Sessions: Late-night study sessions often involve attempts to communicate with extraterrestrial beings or analyze the psychic energy of textbooks. 78. Telepathic Syllabus Distribution: Professors at Hampshire are said to distribute their syllabi telepathically, ensuring students are always one step ahead of the curriculum. 79. Ghostly Tutors: When students need extra help, they can call upon the ghosts of great thinkers who appear to provide guidance in the wee hours. 80. The Great Debate of 3 A.M.: Intellectual debates are known to break out at 3 A.M. because that's when students claim their brain waves are most in sync with the cosmos. These outlandish and hilarious stereotypes continue to paint a picture of Hampshire College's culture as a place where creativity, eccentricity, and humor thrive. Remember, these are all in good fun and shouldn't be taken too seriously, but they do capture the playful spirit of this unique institution!

Certainly, let's keep the laughs and absurdity coming with more playful stereotypes about Hampshire College: 81. "Zen of Recycling": Hampshire students have achieved such a level of zen that they can meditate their way to perfect recycling, making even the most mundane chores a transcendent experience. 82. Quantum Cafeteria: The campus cafeteria is rumored to have a "quantum buffet," where students can simultaneously enjoy every dish, thanks to a mysterious phenomenon known as "superposition of flavors." 83. Ghostly Guest Lecturers: Occasionally, famous thinkers from the past materialize as holographic guest lecturers, sharing insights on their philosophical journeys. 84. Campus Sock Exchange: Hampshire has its own currency, the "SockCoin," used for trading mismatched socks and bizarre trinkets in a weekly sock exchange. 85. "Chrono-Courses": Some Hampshire courses are rumored to transcend time. Students emerge from a 2-hour class feeling like they've lived a thousand years of enlightenment. 86. The "Debate-a-Thon": Instead of traditional sports, Hampshire hosts annual "Debate-a-Thons," where students compete to see who can engage in the most profound debates without taking a breath. 87. Midnight Costume Parades: Spontaneous costume parades break out at midnight, where students dress up as historical figures, abstract concepts, or their future selves. 88. "Existential Etiquette" Classes: Hampshire offers unconventional classes like "Existential Etiquette," where students learn to gracefully navigate the absurdity of social norms. 89. Quantum Lockers: Hampshire lockers are said to be in a constant state of flux, spontaneously appearing and disappearing, adding an element of surprise to every day. 90. Unicycle University Transit: Hampshire students navigate the campus on unicycles, mastering the art of

balance while pondering the mysteries of existence. These absurd and humorous stereotypes continue to highlight the unique and whimsical nature of Hampshire College's culture. Remember, they're all in the spirit of fun and creativity!

Absolutely, let's dive even deeper into the realm of absurdity and humor with more playful stereotypes about Hampshire College: 91. "Eco-Carpet Commencement": At graduation, instead of walking on a traditional stage, students perform a ceremonial dance on a massive eco-friendly carpet made from recycled syllabi. 92. "The Poetry Gauntlet": New students are initiated into Hampshire through the "Poetry Gauntlet," where they must compose spontaneous haikus about abstract concepts to enter campus. 93. Underwater Debates: Some of the most profound debates happen underwater in the campus pool, where students discuss the meaning of life while holding their breath. 94. "Recycled Wisdom" Sculptures: Hampshire students create sculptures using discarded textbooks, with each piece representing the collective knowledge of past generations. 95. The Campus Time Capsule: There's an enormous time capsule buried on campus, rumored to contain messages from future Hampshire students sent back in time to inspire their predecessors. 96. The "Silent Library Disco": During exam week, the library transforms into a "Silent Library Disco," where students groove to the rhythms of silence and occasionally break out into interpretive dance. 97. "Caffeine Enlightenment" Retreats: Students embark on caffeine-fueled retreats to the mystical mountains of Hampshire, where they seek enlightenment through an endless supply of espresso shots. 98. Quantum Thought Experiments: In philosophy classes, students engage in "quantum thought experiments," exploring alternate realities where logical paradoxes become everyday occurrences. 99. The "Library Labyrinth": Hampshire's library isn't just a place for books; it's a labyrinth filled with riddles and puzzles that lead to hidden pockets of wisdom. 100. "Existential Parenting" Workshops: Hampshire offers workshops for parents on raising existential children, where they learn to nurture their child's inner philosopher. These zany and surreal stereotypes continue to capture the delightful and imaginative spirit of Hampshire College's culture. Remember, they're all in the name of humor and creative exaggeration!

Absolutely, let's keep the humor and absurdity flowing with more playful stereotypes about Hampshire College: 101. The "Meditation Olympics": Hampshire hosts an annual "Meditation Olympics," where students compete in events like "Transcendental Triathlons" and "Mindful Marathons." 102. "Abstract Interpretive Parking": Parking spaces on campus are a blank canvas for students' abstract interpretations of vehicular placement. 103. Telepathic Class Scheduling: Students claim they don't need course catalogs; they simply telepathically communicate their desired schedules to the registrar. 104. Socratic Squirrel Society: The Socratic Squirrel Society is a secret organization rumored to hold philosophical debates in the treetops. 105. Paranormal Research Study Breaks: Students take breaks from studying to investigate paranormal activity on campus, including friendly debates with resident ghosts. 106. The "Eternal Lecture": Some classes are known to enter a state of perpetual lecture, where professors and students engage in discussions that transcend time and space. 107. Interpretive Street Signs: Hampshire's street signs are open to interpretation. "Stop" might mean "Pause and Ponder," and "Yield" might mean "Surrender to Existential Uncertainty." 108. Anti-Gravity Yoga Seminars: Students master the art of anti-gravity yoga to achieve a deeper connection with the cosmos, often floating above the quad in lotus position. 109. "Absurdism in Action" Theater: Hampshire's theater department is famous for staging "Absurdism in Action" plays, where characters question the meaning of their own existence. 110. Cosmic Commencement Hats: Graduation caps are equipped with tiny telescopes so that students can stargaze while receiving their diplomas. These

whimsical stereotypes continue to explore the fantastical world of Hampshire College, where laughter, creativity, and eccentricity know no bounds. Remember, these are all in the spirit of lighthearted fun!

Certainly, let's continue the fun with even more playful stereotypes about Hampshire College: 111. "Whimsical Weather Reporting": The campus weather report includes mystical forecasts like "a 30% chance of existential fog" and "a high probability of cosmic drizzle." 112. "Time-Traveling Library": Hampshire's library is rumored to have a time-traveling section where you can borrow books from the future, leading to perplexing conversations about yet-to-be-written literature. 113. "Dorm Room Dioramas": Students are known to transform their dorm rooms into living dioramas representing abstract concepts like "The Duality of Light and Shadow." 114. "Transcendent Toga Parties": Toga parties at Hampshire are unlike any others; attendees engage in toga-clad philosophical debates while sipping herbal tea. 115. "Interdimensional Picnics": Students host picnics in a hidden part of the campus rumored to be a portal to alternate dimensions, where sandwiches taste better in parallel universes. 116. "Abstract Sports Day": Hampshire's annual sports day features events like the "Existential Egg Toss" and the "Quantum Leap Relay," where winners receive metaphorical medals. 117. "Kaleidoscopic Graduation": At graduation, students enter a kaleidoscopic tunnel of knowledge, symbolizing their transformative journey through Hampshire's unique academic landscape. These playful and imaginative stereotypes continue to highlight the whimsical and creative culture of Hampshire College. Remember, they're all in the name of good-natured fun and creativity!

Love this college!

Fuck this college!



CONTENT WARNING FOR SUBMISSION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE: LAUNGUAGE SURROUNDING SEX & SEXUAL ASSAULT

The collected works of Juniper Balbus-Holmquist
by Juniper Balbus-Holmquist

Because I have 1. No life 2. Hate publishers and editors 3. Am an attention whore 4. Get off on this—
graphically

I thus present to u an episode of making the omen be 100 pages of me ep 2- poetry boogaloo

Fuck my hometown

Fuck my hometown

For all it's good and bad for

Fuck my hometown

Vertical prudes and lateral whores

Fuck my hometown

For thinspo and Pinterest and Lana and 2014 tumblr and age gaps and lack of consent and actresses
with dicopomorpha echmepterygis [smallest multicellular organism] bodies and blue whale egos

Fuck my hometown

For passing, lateral oppression, hipsters with no hippie, stoners who rock, rockers who [throw]
stone[s]

And fuck my hometown

For beer drinking Sarte reading Satantango watching, child fetishist, trans fetishist, lesbian fetishist,
as a man in the culture, the culture is him, belching and puking stinky onion and deep dish pizza and
IPA, and brownie and Italian beef all over the other half's vagina

And yet I love it

Just like I love being hurt

Just I love playing back the tape on my death

And any abuse

Is it still love?

If it's between sex, fuck and rape

I didn't say mutilate my hometown

I didn't say genital trauma my hometown

I didn't say chainsaw gutsfuck my hometown

It's inevitable I guess

That sometimes this lifelong relationship will be like "What a casually cool, haunting, handsome yet
also pretty, coy, boyish, sheepish, gently cocky girl— I could not be more in love"

And other times it will be a true assault against me, a scene gone too far, a safeword not respected

"I'm the next act

Waiting in the wings

I'm an animal

Trapped in your hot car

I am all the days

That you choose to ignore"

Fuck you Chicago

“I am a moth

Who just wants to share your light

I’m just an insect

Trying to get out of the night

I only stick with you

Because there are no others”

Fuck you Chicago

I’ll see you Nov 21st... I’ll have weed, mezcal margarita, all the girls you love, and lobster ravioli

Fuck you Chicago

Maybe Freud was right

But are you the mother to fuck, or the father to kill

I still am not sure...

Self-And-Other-Justice—As-The-Same-Grains-Of-Sand-On-Chicago’s-Man-Made-Beaches

Are u fucking glad now ur not a ripped-apart cardboard box— skinning yourself and calling it a coat-wearing the fur of your pet chinchilla you killed yourself!

Would you tell me, yourself to fucking deal, fucking cope, the way you told them? Would you say to me shut the fuck up, hang?

How often do I play the fake game of relativism in face of relativism now u might ask?

In 5 weeks, 5 months, 5 years, 5 decades how about?

Did I scare you? Where's ur health at, now that I staved off so much development by being the chaos queer, by pussyfooting the hierarchy of needs

Where am I/You/us when I ask whose horror this is

Are we the same or seperate

Our shared body more sign and symbol or here now

Consequences live forever, consequences don't live forever, cope, deal

Consequences live forever, consequences don't live forever, cope, deal

Consequences live forever, consequences don't live forever, cope, deal

Consequences live forever, consequences don't live forever, cope, deal

I now know I wouldn't have it any other way!!!

J2GIRL

In a sky full of stars only one can be brightest

So what of the others?

Descriptivist? no, for that would sullen their gift

So we tell the stories

And look for the non plus ultra of you, of anyone, of anything;

A novel written to be all-consummate; a blood-girl lying to the ground, lying to the earth lying to her mother-goddess-face that her hope-love-for-another equals me but never will materialize

She is•she isn't

Cope deal

She's/Us's— that mixing


Over

She's/Us's— that mixing

Maybe forever

17 years— wish I see you- may I wish may I pray

You dissolve into the æther

To be mine in thought and intention 

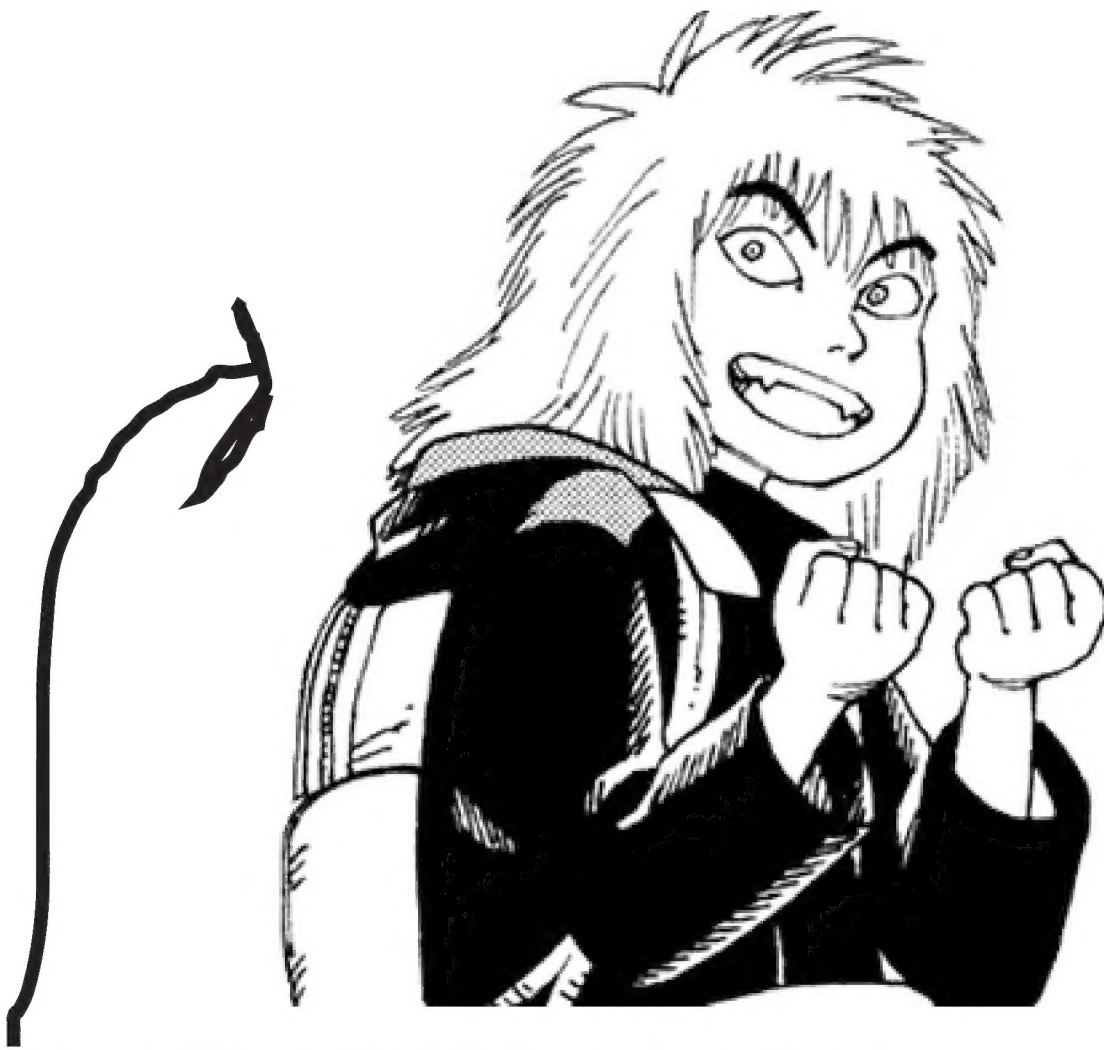
Section Hate

by Maxine A. Gamboa



MF'W: HxH is geniunely so good guys wtf go read/watch it rn:

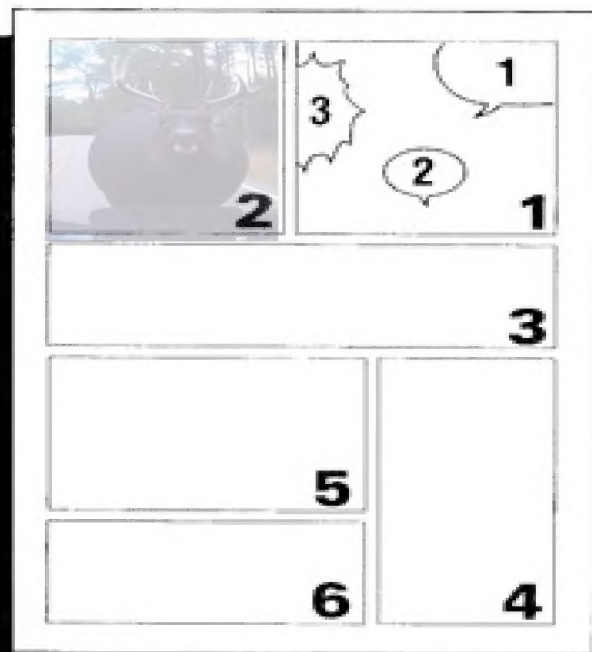
(CONTENT WARNING FOR HxH: DEPICTIONS OF PEDOPHILIA, DEPICTIONS OF TRANSPHOBIA, SLIGHT-GORE, CHILD ABUSE, ANIMAL DEATH, & RACIST DEPICTIONS OF BLACK CHARACTERS)



(This character (Takezuka Michaka) is from another amazing series: Heavenly Delusion! Check it out! **(CONTENT WARNING FOR THE SERIES: SUICIDE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, INCEST, IMPLIED UNDERAGE SEX & SEXUALITY, & BRIEF GORE)**)



You're Reading in the Wrong Direction!!



Whoops! Guess what? You're starting at the wrong end of the

...It's true! In keeping with the original format, this is meant to be read from right to left, starting in the upper-right

Unlike English, which is read from left to right, this is read from right to left, meaning that action, sound effects and word-balloon order are completely backwards... something which can make readers unfamiliar with this feel pretty backwards. For this reason, this published in

the sometimes been published "flopped"—that is, printed in as though seen from the other side of a mirror.

By flopping pages, publishers can confuse readers, but the compromise is not without its downside. For one thing, a character in a flopped who once wore in the original version a T-shirt emblazoned with (as in "the merry") now wears one which reads

"Y A M"! Additionally, many creators in are unhappy with the process, as some feel the mirror-imaging of skews their original intentions.

We are proud to bring you this in the original unflopped format. For now, though, turn to the other side of the book and let the adventure begin...!

—Editor



Max
editing
this shit
(omen)

OMEN MUSIC

